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Hindu Message

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

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Editor: T. K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar B.A.

VOL. 4.] THURSDAY APRIL 24, 1919. [No. 1.

The **Hindu Message** stands for

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(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

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A Vision Of India.

ASOKA.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

What sight is this that I with joy behold!
A group of damsels clad in bright attire
Of scarlet silks that shine like flowers of fire
Come hither with their wondrous feet of gold!
Beat gently, heart, not shy nor overbold
Though such fair nymphs of light draw ever nigher.
Each look of theirs will take thee higher and higher
To where God's Love doth human loves enfold.
They come to rid thee of thy flowerless gloom
With quickening touch of soft sweet lotus feet
Oh gay and glad bright and joyful sight!
Full soon thy frame will thrill with ruby bloom
As poesy's raptures now have found their seat
In my poor heart that knew not joy of light.

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING 24, APL., 1919.

Satyagraha and After-Events.

With a rare insight and courageous recognition of truth which is the characteristic mark of a true Satyagrahi, the saintly Gandhi has perceived that the movement which he started with absolute singleness of purpose and which derives all its moral force from its association with his name, has been besmirched by that very violence which he so earnestly and emphatically condemned and as a consequence has temporarily suspended the movement. Mr. Gandhi points out in his letter announcing the suspension of the movement that in the course of the Satyagraha struggle in South Africa, several thousands of indentured Indians had struck work. While this entirely peaceful and voluntary Satyagraha strike was going on, a strike of the European miners and railway employees was declared. Overtures were made to Mr. Gandhi to make common cause with the European strikers. But it did not require even a single moment's thought for the selfless Gandhi as a Satyagrahi to contemptuously decline the overtures. He not only declined to join hands with the other strikers but went a step further and suspended his satyagraha strike for fear lest it should be classed with the other one in which methods of violence and the use of arms were much in evidence. From that moment satyagraha came to be recognised by the Europeans of South Africa as an honorable and honest constitutional movement. "I can do no less at the present critical moment" says Mr. Gandhi. "I would be untrue to satyagraha if I allowed it by any action of mine to be used as an occasion for feeding violence, for embittering the relations between the English and the Indians. Our satyagraha must therefore now consist in *ceaselessly helping the authorities in all the ways available to us as satyagrahis to restore order and to curb lawlessness.*" The Italics is ours. We applaud this wise decision though it is late. Disquieting news comes from every corner of the country. There have been riots accompanied by violence, arson and murder at Amritsar, Lahore and Ahmedabad and several other places have narrowly escaped from similar happenings. Reports of these riots clearly reveal the revolting folly and criminal blunder of the infuriated mobs at several of these places. We wish to express with all the emphasis at our disposal our deep abhorrence and strong condemnation for the acts of violence such as the murders of innocent bank employees in Amritsar and of Government servants in other parts, both European and Indian, the wanton destruction of Government offices, Railway stations and other public and private buildings, the looting of banks and treasuries, the wrecking of Railway lines and electrical installations, the cutting of telegraph and telephone communications, and the breaking up of fire-engines. All these and other such acts of unbridled lawlessness are altogether alien to the best traditions of the country and to the express instructions of the accepted leader of the Satyagraha movement. The idea of burning down buildings and wrecking trains, rioting and looting, is absolutely inconceivable

to a Satyagrahi; much more, of course, is the thought of taking away life. Hence we have to pause and consider well over the real cause that has caused all this deplorable destruction of life and property. Let us take stock of the situation and calmly ponder over them. The salient facts, as they have appeared in the Press hitherto, are well summarised by the *Mahratta*. They are 1. The passing of the Rowlatt Act in the face of the Universal Indian opposition, 2. the declaration of the campaign of Passive Resistance against the measure by Mr. Gandhi and his associates, 3. the observances of the 30th of March at Delhi where it led accidentally to fatal results and elsewhere where no untoward results happend, 4. Observance of the 6th of April again throughout India which too was marked by much enthusiasm but not by violence anywhere, 5. Mr. Gandhi's announcement to sell certain proscribed books in Bombay, 6. His journey to Delhi, the serving of orders of externment of the Panjab, Delhi and Central Governments on him and his deportation and confinement to the Bombay Presidency, 7. The consequent outbreak of riots at various places, 8. the deportation of Drs. Kichlew and Satyapal at Amritsar, 9. Furious outbreaks there and at Lahore, Calcutta and various other places and 10. proclamation of martial law, firing on the mob and various other preventive and coercive measures. From this rough survey of events it can be easily seen that except the one unfortunate incident at Delhi the whole country was calm and quiet until the arrest and deportation of Mr. Gandhi. It does not lie within us to determine whether the Government was wise in preventing Mr. Gandhi from visiting Delhi and the Panjab. Only those responsible for maintaining order in those difficult provinces can decide it. But this much we can say that we are in full agreement with the 'Times of India' when it says "we who know Mr. Gandhi well and understand, if we cannot always agree with, his ideals and methods may well feel that in times of excitement and unrest nothing but good can come from his presence in a disturbed zone." This was fully borne out by the events in Ahmedabad. There the Commissioner Mr. Pratt gave Mr. Gandhi every assistance in his work of pacification and martial law regulations also were relaxed in order to facilitate him. This had the most salutary effect in quelling the disturbances. Similarly at Delhi also when the Chief Commissioner conferred with the leaders of the people at Delhi, it was stated that the reason for the strike was the order made against Mr. Gandhi. It was only after the Chief Commissioner announced that Mr. Gandhi was in Ahmedabad free and in good health and that he would communicate to the Government of India that the strike was due to the orders made against Mr. Gandhi, that order was restored and business was resumed. Thus, it is clear even to the casual observer that Mr. Gandhi's arrest was the prime cause of all these disturbances and once they were caused, several other things combined to produce utter unbridled lawlessness which Mr. Gandhi himself deplores very much. He says in his message: "the events that have happened in course of the last few days have been most disgraceful to Ahmedabad and as all these things have happened in my name I am ashamed of them and

those who have been responsible for them have thereby not honoured me but disgraced me. A rapier run through my body could hardly have pained me more. I have said times without number that Satyagraha admits of no violence, no pillage, no incendiarism." Mr. Gandhi would rather suffer any wrong than be saved in this manner. As he himself put it: "If deeds such as these could save me from the prison house or the scaffold I should not like to be so saved." Thus, it is clear that the persons who led the people on this mad path of wanton destruction had nothing to do with Satyagraha. They are the enemies of society and it is the bounden duty of all peace-loving citizens to put a stop to all their machinations and to allay all excitements and to assist in the maintenance of law and order. Our foremost duty now is to heartily co-operate with the Government in restoring absolute calm in the country and in removing by exhortation and by every other possible method those elements of violence which besmirch the fair name of our Mother India.

Notes and Comments.

The Provincial Educational Conference assembles at Trichinopoly in May. We propose to issue on that occasion a special educational number of the HINDU MESSAGE with special contributions from several eminent Educationists. Full details will be given in the next issue.

* * *

The keeper of the Amrita Bazaar Patrika Press was served with a notice on Wednesday last by the Government of Bengal intimating the forfieture of the amount of Rs. 5000 which was deposited as security for the said press, under the Indian Press Act, in view of two articles which appeared in its issues of the 10th and 12th insts.

* * *

The Hindu Patriot says:—A remour is afloat that Sir Asutosh Mukerjee will be the next pucca Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court. Rumour is also busy connecting Sir Asutosh's name with the presidency of the Board of Education that is to be constituted under the report of the new Universities Commission. A third rumour credits him with retirement from Government service and assuming the leadership of Bengal. Any of the three posts will suit nicely the man with the most capacious intellect in Asia.

* * *

A new discovery of great scientific interest has just been made by Sir J. C. Bose in his Research Institute which proves that plants in general perceive and respond to long ether waves used in wireless signalling. In vast range of electrical spectrum plants are extremely sensitive to ultra violet rays wave, the length of which is shorter than a hundred thousandth part of an inch. Going to the opposite end of the spectrum, in the region of invisible heat rays the whole wave length is about one thousandth part of an inch. Professor Bose has shown that plants also perceive and respond to them. The heat raised is also perceived by us as the sensation of warmth but we have no sense organ to perceive wireless message where the electric waves employed vary from many yards to miles in length. Sir J. C. Bose's recent discoveries prove that the range of perception in plants is far more extended than in human beings. His newly invented balanced crescograph gives striking records of response of various seedlings to these long waves. Two additional methods of mechanical and electrical response give independent corroboration of his results. The sign of response is found to be either positive or negative according to the intensity of impulse received.

* * *

It is with much regret that we have to record the death of Mr. A. Sankariah B.A., F.M.U., F.F.H.S, the retired Dewan Peishkar of Cochin, at Trichinopoly at an advanced age. To the last he maintained his full viogour and helped all good movements in a quiet unassuming manner. Simple in his habits he mixed freely with all and was a fearless advocate of the people's cause. To the end he was following closely all questions of current politics and often communicated his views to the newspapers and also to the authorities direct. His public benefactions are too numerous and well-known. The gap caused by his loss could not be easily filled up. We offer our sincere condolences to his bereaved family.

The Present Situation.

(BY M. K. ACHARYA B.A., L.T.)

No intelligent Indian can read the resolution of the Government of India on the Present Situation issued on the 14th instant without a keen sense of disappointment that the Government have failed to trace the true causes of the lamentable disturbances that have broken forth recently in several parts of the country and particularly in the Panjab. I have read that resolution very carefully and feel it my duty to point out some of the loose statements and insinuations therein made whose correctness, I feel, cannot pass unchallenged.

(1) The Government attribute all the troubles that have ensued of late "directly" to the agitation against the Rowlatt Act. Has this been proved? How much of the violence and disorders which we all deplore has been provoked "directly" by executive high-handedness, especially in the Panjab and Delhi? If in those provinces the people had been allowed quietly to observe the Satyagraha Day, without undue obstruction and interference by the local authorities, if later the Defence of India Act had not been *misapplied* to Gandhi and the Panjab leaders, if Gandhi had not been prevented from entering Delhi whither he wished to go for the very purpose of putting down any violence on the part of the people, if the leaders at Amritsar and Lahore had not been deported in the high-handed manner for which Sir Michael O'Dwyer has now become so notorious, if by these steps the people had not been provoked into lawlessness, would any serious disturbances have occurred? Irresponsible Anglo-Indian journalists may naturally goad the Government to the most high-handed repression. But could any man of common sense, not to say of statesmanship, think of deporting or externing popular leaders at a time of great popular excitement and not deliberately intend to augment such excitement? In short were the recent disturbances brought about "directly" by official high-handedness or by the Satyagraha movement? The Government of India in their resolution have not adduced one tittle of evidence in support of their sweeping generalisation that to the agitation against the Rowlatt Act "must be directly attributed the open breaches of the public peace." On the other hand we read in the latest telegrams that the present troubles in Delhi have been all due to the externment of Gandhi, and to the apprehension that in Delhi also the popular leaders would be deported. On the Chief Commissioner's giving an assurance to the contrary, the people are resuming their peaceful avocations, and the shops are being reopened. Does this support the Government theory? Again at Ahmedabad the Satyagrahis have been conspicuous in their services for restoring order: and Gandhi's presence and words have done what thousands of soldiers could not have accomplished. Does this show that to the agitation against the Rowlatt Act "must be directly attributed" all the recent troubles?

(2) The Government in their resolution, having started with the above wrong genesis of the troubles, want to throw the responsibility therefor entirely on the popular leaders, here again following loyally the dictums of the Anglo-Indian Extremist Press. They declare that they foresaw and warned the popular leaders "against the serious consequences to the public peace which would follow from an agitation such was then threatened." Apprised of the coming agitation and foreseeing its consequences why did the Government persist in the Rowlatt legislation? A Governmnt obstinately passing a bad law against the unanimous opinion of the people is not responsible for the consequences that follow its ignoring of the people's wishes and sentiments, but those who honestly and constitutionally oppose the legislation are so responsible! Will such a political maxim be accepted in any civilised country?

(3) We read in the Government resolution "there is ample evidence to prove that in more than one place those locally responsible for organisation overstepped the limits of lawful persuation." The people's version is that there was no such overstepping anywhere. If the Government have "ample evidence" in their possession to

prove the contrary, why do they not publish it?

(4) The resolution repeats that the Rowlatt Act is only intended "against revolutionary and anarchical crime" and declares that the "Government has given the most categorical pledge (which the Governor-General in Council takes this opportunity to reiterate) that the tenor and intention of the Act will be scrupulously safeguarded." Was not a similar categorical pledge given in 1915, when the Defence of India Act was passed, that it was intended to be purely a war measure? Has not that pledge been broken? Has not that Act been applied to muzzle constitutional political agitation in the country? Has it not been grossly *misapplied* even against Gandhi than whom no one could be a more loyal subject of the King-Emperor or a more uncompromising enemy of lawlessness and violence? If the pledge given in 1915 has been violated, how can the people feel sure that the pledge given in 1919 would be "scrupulously" kept?

(5) The Resolution details the drastic powers of repression which the Government possess. "Martial law and no damned nonsense" may be very blissful to the souls of Anglo-Indian fire-eaters: it may terrify the people; it may cow them down; but does any British statesman worthy of the name believe that repression will breed contentment in any country, that bullets can carry conviction where logic does not?

Indeed we cannot help deploring that the Government of India has surrendered its balance of mind to the advocates of repression. There is no thinking Indian that does not deeply and sincerely regret the deplorable happenings of the past few days, they have been due firstly to the Government of India's utter disregard of Indian opinion, and secondly to the high-handed and I fear over-alarmed and panic-stricken, acts of Provincial Governments especially of the Panjab, and of Delhi, and only lastly and to a very limited measure due to the popular excitement caused by the Rowlatt legislation and least of all due to the Satyagraha movement. Violence is opposed to the basic principles of Satyagraha, there is no true Satyagrahi who will not loyally co-operate with Government, as in some places he has already co-operated, in putting down lawlessness and violence. But the Resolution before us breathes not the spirit of trust in the people, but of trust only in its own unlimited powers of repression. The Resolution, whether in its sentiments or in its language, might have been as well drafted in the Editorial rooms of the Englishman or the Pioneer, or the Civil and Military Gazette, as in the Viceregal Chambers at Simla. Its arguments cannot carry any conviction to the average Indian who holds, and must continue to hold till the contrary is proved beyond doubt, that the recent disturbances have mostly been due to the provocation caused by official high-handedness. Even such a sober and moderate politician as the Hon'ble Mr. Sastri is of opinion that "the Panjab government has blundered completely and the Government of India must pull up their Panjab Government promptly." I doubt however whether the Government of India will do so. Instead of pulling up Panjab the Government of India invite other provinces to follow the unenviable example of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. We have only patiently to wait and to pray that the Government of India may get over the panic of the movement and perceive the absurdity of ever making people contented through repression. I have no doubt that the present situation will right itself in a few days—not through O'Dwyerism, but through the love of peace inherent in the Indian people, and above all through the healthy influence which Gandhi and his followers are bound to exert over their countrymen. And then let us hope that the Government of India will be able to see things in their due proportion.

A Message to the Young.

[This is the third letter of advice by Professor K. Sundararama Iyer, M.A., to the young students of Mannargudi.—Ed.]

I have received two courteous and urgent calls from your President, and so I feel that I cannot, without giving room for misunderstanding, keep silent. But I feel also that I am not in any manner fitted to assume the role of a counsellor and guide for the rising

generation. You ought to appeal to the great and distinguished men who abound in the Metropolis of our Presidency and who have come forward as our leaders. Still, for fear of incurring displeasure and for what I trust will be the last time, I will say one word to such young men among you as may be pleased to set a value on what I may say. That word is that personality is of least as great importance as principle in the organisation of public movements or the acceptance of leadership. What I mean is that we must not accept as desirable public leaders or workers,—but regard as intolerable shams—individuals who, however much we may for the moment approve of their principles or applaud their energy in prosecuting them, have been known to have played fast and loose with the eternal verities, ethical or spiritual, which are entitled to receive our unfailing adhesion and allegiance in the conduct of life. If we unreflectingly allow ourselves to be controlled by the personal ascendencies of worldly and egoistic losses, demagogues and adventurers who avail themselves of their personal magnetism and charm to displace worthy men or secure a numerous throng of admirers or allies, we shall in the end discover that we have done ourselves nothing but harm. History abounds with instances of unmentionable men like Alcibiades or Kaiser William who have wrought abundant mischief, when their fellow-men, blinded by the mystery of personality have enthroned and submitted to them, merely as promising heralds of some eagerly-desired goal of endeavour. Mere renunciation is not rare in this world; and certainly it is a rude and wrong test, though a popular one, to apply in the selection and acceptance of leaders to advance principles and causes which interest us. Disinterestedness in the heart and the enlightenment of the spirit can alone enable men to lead us to the right sort of goal, even though it may have to be reached at a distance of time and an amount of painful self-sacrifices which, at present, may seem beyond the limits of what is endurable or satisfactory to people who are in a hurry.

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ADHYAYA II.

(continued.)

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

O Dhananjaya, do thy duties being rooted in *yoga* (*i.e.*, as an act of worship of God), abandoning attachment, and same in success and in failure. Such evenness and equilibrium of mind is called *Yoga*.

NOTES :

1. योगः संनहनोपायध्यानसङ्गतियुक्तिषु. Here *Yoga* means उपाय (means). The duty should be as enjoined by the Lord, by way of glad fulfilment of his commands as an act of worship of God, renouncing all results to Him as श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु, and without even praying that He should show grace as a recompense for doing the duty.

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनंजय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥ ४९ ॥

Mere action is far inferior to the action done with the *buddhiyoga* above-said. Seek refuge in such *buddhi*. Pitiable are those who work for the sake of results.

NOTES :

1. Pitiable indeed is he who does not rise through Karmayoga to Bhakti and Jnana and thence to God-Love and God-realisation. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says:

यो वा एतदक्षरं गार्ग्यविदित्वास्माल्लोकात्प्रैति स कृपणः ॥
See also
यथाचिरात्सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति विद्वान् ॥

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥ ५० ॥

He who has this *Buddhi* casts off both good and evil deeds. Therefore strive for such *yoga*. In the doing of deeds this *yoga* is of magical power.

NOTES :

1. Karmayoga has the magical property of transmitting deeds from being means of bondage into being means of freedom. As the ज्ञानवासिष्ठ says :

विज्ञाय सेवितश्चोरो मैत्रीमेति न चोरताम् ॥

(*To be continued.*)

The Dreams of the Soul.

(BY AN INDIAN DREAMER).

IX

As I was wandering with dreaming careless feet, I chanced upon a garden full of sweetness and repose.

A gentle rill flowed with bright sparkling water that sang the grandeur of the mountain where it was born and the glory of the ocean whither it went.

I sat upon a smooth rock in the bed of the stream and feasted my eyes on the surrounding loveliness of leaf and bud and flower and fruit.

As I sat there I saw a beautiful parrot fly straight like an arrow through the space in front of me.

It went winged with joy and vocal like a singing soul to the Home of its Eternal Rapture.

It went into leafy recesses of a blossomed mango tree and was lost in the surrounding greenness.

Shri Krishna of Brindavan.

According to the Hindu Scriptures there are seven cities in India which are believed to possess the virtue of giving liberation to any pious soul provided the bones are laid down there. The seven cities are: Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya, Kashi, Kanchi, Avantika, and Dwaravati. Mathura stands second on the list and is said to be as sacred as Kashi which is known as "Muktipuri" or the "city of liberation." The former was about 5,000 years ago the capital of the powerful Yadavas and was ruled by the iron hand of a tyrant whose equal could scarcely be met with in the annals of history of any nation. He had no scruples to shut up his own father in prison even in those good old days and to usurp his throne for the sake of satisfying the devilish passions of his heart. His name was Kamsa. He had a sister Devaki by name. She married Vasudeva. There was a prophecy that the eighth child born of Devaki would be the cause of Kamsa's death. The wily Kamsa in order to save himself from such a horrible prophecy and to cut matters short, made up his mind to murder his sister but desisted from translating into action his resolution at the earnest prayer of Vasudeva who intervened and suggested a course which was acceptable to Kamsa. Vasudeva impressed upon the mind of his sweet brother-in-law that the latter's purpose would be equally served if Devaki's children could be placed at his disposal at their very birth and this Vasudeva promised to do faithfully. Kamsa, thereupon, kept the young couple, Vasudeva and Devaki in prison and there did the young lady conceive six times and bring forth six children and all the children were placed by Vasudeva in the hands of the tyrant who mercilessly murdered all of them. Devaki's delivery on the seventh occasion was declared abortive and then came the turn of the eighth and for the eighth time did she conceive. The feelings of the parents at the sight of the murder of their innocent babies can better be imagined than described. Months passed on and keener grew the anxiety of the couple to save the life of the infant at least this time. They resolved to do so at all risks. The child was born in due time in the dead of a night of the dark fortnight of the month of Shravana. All the sentries were fast asleep. The doors unlocked themselves. The iron fetters on the hands of Vasudeva and Devaki slipped down as if by magic. A "solemn stillness" was there which was to an unappreciable extent broken only by the drizzling rain from heavens. There was no time for hesitation or speculation. The father took the child in his arms and walked out of prison unquestioned and uninterrupted. He had to cross the river in order to carry out his plan. The river was in floods, but at the approach of the man with the child the

water in the river parted into two columns and let him go his way. The child was taken to Nanda's house at Gokul and to Nanda fell the sweet duty of bringing up the child which was destined to play a marvellous part afterwards. Born in prison and brought up in comparative obscurity, this was the child which in after years helped the distressed, put down the tyrants punished the usurpers, rewarded the virtuous, gave Kingdoms to many but coveted none for itself. A householder, yet an ascetic; a worldly man yet a philosopher; a polygamist yet the purest of celibates: the maker of kings, yet a humble subject; the object of reverence by great sages, yet the humble charioteer of Arjuna: the lover of mankind yet above attachment; strong, yet forgiving; powerful, yet meek; intelligent, yet free from egotism; God, yet man! Such was the child which was left to the care of Nanda, the King of the cowherds. The child in due course, grew up to be a handsome little boy. He was so very attractive that persons whose eyes used to meet him forgot themselves and stood motionless in his presence with their gaze fixed on him. It was indeed a pleasure, the like of which can very seldom be met by mortal eyes, to see the dear little Krishna for, that was the child's name. He was thus a source of bliss to all the villagers of Gokul. Many calamities had threatened the village of Gokul and though all of them were warded off by Krishna, yet the villagers thought of shifting their residence to some safe place. Accordingly they fixed upon Brindavan as the best place and moved there bag and baggage. They lived there happily but their happiness was not unalloyed even there; for grave dangers encountered them every now and then and Krishna got many more opportunities to bring into prominent display his latent powers by rooting out the evils. He killed many demons who were a constant scourge to the people and the people came to recognise him not as an ordinary mortal but the Almighty in flesh and blood; for was it ever possible for a mortal creature to do things which He did? To quote an instance, once the rain fell continuously for full seven days in torrents and deluged the whole of Brindavan. The people were quite helpless against the rain to protect their lives and property. Conscious of Krishna's omnipotence, they raised their hands to him for protection and their prayer was not in vain. Shri Krishna, the blessed Lord, lifted the Govardhan Mountain on his finger and held it up for seven days after which the dreadful rain came to a stop. All these acts drew him still nearer the hearts of the cowherd population of Brindavan and the fair sex especially had no doubts left in their mind as to the divinity of Krishna and they naturally admired him wholeheartedly. As days passed on their admiration for the divine boy grew into fervent love and love filled them with divine madness. They gave up every kind of attachment and cut asunder all the worldly ties. They cared neither for their fathers, nor mothers, nor sisters, nor husbands, nor any other nearest relative; for, all their love flowed in one big channel and ran towards the blessed Shri Krishna. Did they care for their own bodies? For their life? Not they; for, what were these without Krishna? Of what avail was it to keep all these and lose the sweet Shri Krishna? The Gopis preferred Krishna to everything else in this world. They wanted him to be entirely their own; Yes, they wanted him to be physically and mentally theirs and theirs only. They prayed and prayed. Their prayers were the sincerest that were, ever offered and they could not, therefore, long remain unheard.

The rains were over now. Mother earth was robed in green. Rivers were dancing merrily. Ponds full of crystal water presented a fascinating spectacle. Everything showed life and the moon during the nights lent her charm to everything by enveloping it in her silver splendour. On one of such delightful nights a delicious note from a flute was heard in Brindavan. It came from the banks of the river Yamuna. It was so very overwhelming in sweetness that people set aside all their business and gave it their undivided attention. In fact, they were entirely lost in it. The young damsels quitted their homes and ran with all

their might to the Yamuna alone and unattended. On reaching their destination what did they see before them? A cloud-coloured handsome young boy met their eyes. He was clad in yellow robes. A garland of delicious flowers and the sacred Tulasi leaves dangled on his breast and a crown in which were set the purest of gems and rubies adorned his head. Two whale-shaped ear-rings shot out rays of light on his soft cheeks. A dazzling golden belt encircled his waist. Bracelets of matchless brilliancy were on his wrists and necklaces of priceless diamonds and pearls round his neck. He held the flute in his hands and applied it to his soft reddish lips. His forehead was broad, his nose prominent and shaped like the beak of a green parrot, his eyes were bright and intelligent, his hair rich and black. No human pen can describe his superhuman handsomeness. The Gopees, saw him and lost themselves. They gave themselves up entirely, body and soul to Krishna once for all and they gained the goal of human activities. They stood at once liberated in the presence of their Lord. The veil of ignorance fell down from them and they were thus reduced to a state of utter nudity. Blessed are the souls who stand naked before their Lord for theirs is the cup of bliss. Shri Krishna, then, instantaneously transformed Himself into as many forms of Himself as there were the Gopees and played with them. He embraced them, kissed them, and placed Himself in their hands entirely and acted as they bade Him. He allowed them to partake of His divine bliss in any way they pleased. Together they danced, together they played in the river Yamuna, together they frisked about that night. There was no reservation whatsoever. At daybreak they dispersed. This play took place every now and then as long as Shri Krishna was at Brindavan.

This incident in Shri Krishna's life has been taken as a convenient target by critics, both European and Indian. The missionaries are the most prominent among the European critics. Christianity being a proselytising religion and the missionaries being its chief props it is but natural to expect from them nothing short of denunciation of all other religions and of the persons held by these religions as incarnations of God. The main duty of the missionaries is avowedly to spread Christianity and they have little time to lend any thought for the deep philosophical truths hidden in the hoary religion of the Hindus. So their criticism cannot be considered as carrying much weight to require any rejoinder. Some European scholars while attacking Shri Krishna exhibit by their very method of peculiar argument that they are labouring under a disgusting bias and it would be idle to expect these people to change their views, for they stand firmly on the rock of obstinacy with contempt for other religions written on their face. But there are others also who have grasped the things aright and who make no secret of their conviction that the author of the Bhagavad Gita stands unparallelled in the field of philosophy, ethics and religion. Professor Max Muller was one of these and I think, his views should be considered, for obvious reasons to carry more weight than those of others who make it a point to throw dirt at all other religions but their own.

The English-educated Indian critics have to be classified into two groups one class of these critics think that the goal of their life is to please the Europeans and to get their favour. If the Europeans extol Shri Krishna these people also play the second fiddle to them; and if on the other hand the former denounce Him, these queer gentlemen do not fail to contribute their own mite to the worthy cause of blackening the name of God in the form of man. They care very little for what they say, provided their statements do not contradict the prejudiced opinion of the Europeans. In short Europeans are their God and the stability of their convictions depends on the beliefs of the white world. Once upon a time there lived a rich nobleman in India. One of his servants was a perfect sycophant. Now, this nobleman was very fond of brinjals and he said one day to his servant "what a nice thing it is that God has created the vegetable for the sake of mankind!" The servant, observing the tone of his master smiled and replied,

"you are perfectly right, sir. The brinjal is indeed the best of vegetables, for, has it not a crown on its head as a mark of distinction?" That night the nobleman ate too much of brinjals which resulted in indigestion and pain in the stomach, when he explained angrily: "What a dirty thing is this brinjal! I wonder why God should have created such stuff at all!" "Perfectly true sir," replied the servant "The brinjal is the worst of all vegetables for has it not a coronet of thorns on its head as a condign punishment for its wicked nature?" "Well" said the nobleman, "How do you reconcile your yesterday's statement with the one made to-day? You call the vegetable both good and bad. How could it be so!" "Sir," gently replied the servant, "Am I the servant of the brinjal so that I should flatter it always. I am your servant and therefore speak things which you like most." The critics mentioned above belong to the type of this servant and it would be good to let them alone with their criticisms.

The next group of critics are those who want to make a show of their originality. These people expect fame for themselves and think it an act of greatness to pull down from their high pedestals the poor Ramas and Krishnas. These so-called Pandits and Professors sit in judgment, in the seclusion of their rooms, over poor Krishna and declare him guilty of the act of adultery. Their arrogance makes them blind to the flagrant blunders they commit in charging Krishna with debauchery. In the heat of the discussion they know not what they say. A young Indian fresh from school accepted an appointment under an European officer of Government. Being raw he had very little experience of conversing with Europeans in English. After a few days it happened that he was in need of a few days' leave. He had, therefore, to go to the officer in person for applying for the leave. He stood before the officer, saluted him and made his application for leave; but the officer would not let him go, as the pressure of work in the office was very great. Whereupon the young man murmured "Sir, do let me go. I will give you a prostitute."

"What do you mean by this, my young sir?" bawled out the officer. "Please sir," replied the young man, "I am prepared to give you a prostitute if the pressure of work is great; but do not refuse me leave." The young man by the word "*prostitute*" meant a "*substitute*" but in his anxiety to get the leave sanctioned he confounded "prostitute" with "substitute." Exactly similar is the case of these critics. Confusion makes quite a havoc in their poor little heads.

While denouncing Shri Krishna these gentlemen make it convenient to forget altogether that He was an incarnation of God Almighty. If this fact is borne in mind, everything becomes as clear as daylight. Nature's master is not to be judged by nature's laws. Human conceptions of morality have no bearing on His actions. What if the Gopees committed adultery with God? Can it be called adultery? Even a Hindu child knows that Krishna was God in the shape of man. A big Pandit has written about Shri Krishna in such a language that any sane Hindu's pen would tremble to scribble down such dirty lines. He talkes very lightly of Krishna and has the impudence even to attack the Gita which has been accepted on all hands as the best treatise on philosophy even by thoughtful European scholars. Such Pandits have no reason to remain outside a lunatic asylum. Another Professor in the Bombay Presidency who loves the Gita but hates its author, the mischievous Krishna of Brindavan, startled the Hindu world by his discovery that the author of the Gita was altogether a different man from the Krishna of Brindavan. Modern scholars have a tendency to force their own interpretation on ancient sacred writings and in order to do that successfully they resort to the omnipotent theory of interpolation. Krishna ought not to have played with the Gopees; but it is stated that he did play: Then it must be an interpolation or this Krishna has nothing in common with the other Krishna. Alas! What a wretched state of intellectual depravity! God save us from such scholars.

Now, Shri Krishna's life in Brindavan is justified by different people in different

ways. Some say that Shri Krishna was a mere boy while he was in Brindavan and it was naturally impossible for him to have any sexual intercourse with the Gopees. So his Ras Lila was a dance, pure and simple, and there was nothing of a sexual character in it. Others hold that the description of the Ras Lila must be taken as an allegory. The Gopees were the human souls or jivatmas and Shri Krishna, the Higher Self or Paramatma and the dance was an emblem of the union of the human soul with the Higher Soul or Paramatma. But both these methods of refutation appear to me rather timid as they try to interpret the text of the Bhagawat in a way which is not in consonance with its real spirit. Things ought to be looked at as they are and we must have the courage to accept truth as it stands. The description of the Ras Lila in the Bhagawat certainly gives one the impression that it was not altogether free from sensuality and this appears to be the fact. King Parikshit asks Shri Shuka Yogindra in the 10th skanda of the Bhagawat to reconcile the life of Krishna in Brindavan and the object of his incarnation *viz.*, the establishment of Dharma *i.e.*, morality. Shri Shuka explains that Krishna being God is above human laws and whatever he did was right. It is no sin to commit adultery with God; for, the Gopees gained that which even the purest of Rishis did not gain. Who are we mortals to question God? God can be approached in any way but he must be approached, no matter what way. Some may ask why should we not imitate Shri Krishna in his Ras Lila. The answer is we will fall if we dare do so. Then is not an Avatar to be imitated? Certainly it must be imitated in all its aspects. A man who holds up the Govardhan Mountain on his fingers can by all means act the Ras Lila; but not others. Things should not be done by halves. There is a sentence in the Koran which runs as follows:—"Drink and thou fallest." There was a Mahomedan who read only the word "drink" and forthwith began to put it into practice. All sorts of liquors went down his throat daily in big quantities. This was once noticed by a Kazi who remonstrated that the spirits were absolutely forbidden by the Holy Koran. Thereupon the former pointed out that the same was enjoined on all Musalmans by the Koran itself and to support his words he read the word "Drink" in the Koran and stopped. The Kazi then asked him to complete the sentence and the Mahomedan read the words "and thou fallest." Then the Kazi explained to him that he was acting against the scriptures. "Sir," replied the man. "There is no man in the whole world who can put the whole of the Holy Koran into practice. Every man must act according to his own capacity and I find that I can translate into action only the word "Drink" in that sentence. Analogous is the case of the man wanting to imitate Shri Krishna in his Ras Lila, leaving out of question His other acts. Such people must fall. Now, Shri Krishna's life has been sung by several sages of the type of Shri Shuka and they could have possibly gained nothing by extolling an adulterer. These sages were certainly far more pure than the modern critics who entertain the vain hopes of exploring the field of religion by dint of their keen intellects; but they are totally mistaken for religion is a thing which can be gained only through the heart and not by mere intellectual gymnasium. Deluded they are! The name Shri Krishna itself is pure and who can gauge the purity of the hearts of those who had the supreme privilege of associating with Him. Blessed are the Gopees for they only acted according to the teaching of the Gita *viz.*, "Abandoning all ties take shelter with Me alone" and so did the Gopees. What were worldly pleasures, relatives, name and fame to them? Shri Krishna meant to them everything and it is such souls only who can initiate the pure souls into the secrets of God-love or Krishna Bhakti, for once that love is gained, everything is gained in this world.

RADNUS B. DIVARD,

THE HINDU MESSAGE will be posted regularly every week to any address in India, Burma and Ceylon on payment of Rs. 6 only per annum; For all foreign countries within the Postal Union it will be despatched on payment of 10s. 6d. per annum. All subscriptions are payable in advance and should be remitted to the Manager. "*The Hindu Message*", Srirangam.

Random Jottings.

[BY A SON OF INDIA.]

Our benign British Government has now placed Mr. Paddison on special duty for the elevation of the Depressed classes. Truly a tender parental solicitude! But how will Mr. Paddison elevate them? We do not know—nor even perhaps the Government. Does elevation mean setting up the depressed classes against their employers? Mr. Paddison will evidently have an easy time of it. Does it mean providing them with better sanitary facilities? Mr. Paddison cannot have a liberal programme. Does it mean dissuading them from taking to drink and enabling them to put by their scrapings? Mr. Paddison cannot do it; for according to the expert opinion of no less an authority than the Hon'ble Mr. R. B. Wood, I.C.S., complete prohibition will be a dangerous state-policy.

* * *

What is it then that Mr. Paddison will do, or rather is expected to do? He will probably tour through some villages, and submit proposals for the compulsory acquisition of the employer's lands to be placed at the disposal of the down-trodden victims. This is no doubt good, but may we take the liberty of commending to the favourable notice of our Government the wholesome adage that example is better than precept?

* * *

The police ranks for instance are most under-paid, ill-fed, and ill-everything. Suppose the landholders ask the Government, "It is well that you care so much for *our* employees, but let the solicitude begin with your employees. Assign the police quarters to the respective present occupants." Will not the Government say, "If the present occupant quits service he will have to be replaced by another who will have to be housed. We cannot go on constructing and assigning quarters?" The same is the landholder's fix too.

* * *

The chameleon is proverbial for its constant change of hue. The poor animal has been out-beaten by some of our leaders both in the intensity and rapidity of their political convictions. Mr. B. N. Basu, while in India was a tower to the cause of Nationalism, and was instrumental in the drafting of the famous "Memorandum of the Nineteen." But as soon as he was subjected to the chilling influence of cold England, he forswore the memorandum as a hastily-drawn-up document, and practically condemned himself when he said that it was only then that he realised how very irresponsible a critic of Government he had been.

* * *

Next comes the good Mrs. Besant. When Mr. Sastri and others tenaciously clung to their "Moderation," Mrs. Besant proudly walked forth an avowed, acknowledged Nationalist (commonly termed extremist). She violently protested against the Rowlatt Bill, and but yesterday proclaimed her intention of resorting to passive resistance. But where is she to-day? She has taken a leap backward over the heads of Mr. Sastri and his "Moderate" company, and while they are still condemning the iniquitous piece of legislation, she is of opinion that there is nothing in it that a loyal citizen need be afraid of—delightfully vague is the definition of loyalty.

* * *

And where is her lieutenant Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar? Outshone by Messrs. Pal and Satyamurti, he has taken refuge in the Madras Liberal League.

National Topics.

II—Decline in morals. Cigar-smoking—anti-moral bacillus.

(BY J. S. R. SARMA.)

The smoking practice among the Hindus,—*among the so-called high-caste men, the Brahmins in particular*—has been on the increase, just like every other vice which has come to have a fascination for them. It is becoming a distinct nuisance fraught with menace to the morals of the community. It may be questioned, wherein lies its anti-moral characteristic? It is only a matter of individual taste and so far as one can see with the eyes of reason, there is nothing in it detrimental to any national and communal law. But to question everything in every manner is the easiest of all jobs, especially as the matter happens to be of the nature of a self-disciplinary injunction; and as a rule, he who has developed a tendency to question, more often indiscriminately and insolently than ignorantly, is almost cast in an

irresponsible and easy-going frame of mind. Now then, what is morality? Among others, a Lexicon describe it as 'the quality of an action as estimated by a standard of right and wrong.' What is the standard of test as to right and wrong? Is smoking prohibited as evil or wrong by any such standard? Surly yes, by the traditional unwritten standard of the land, which, as having been handed down from age to age, from father to son, is a living law, more forcible and binding than any modern enacted written law. Nor do I think that there is any law which encourages its use, though all seem to agree that if at all, it is likely to do more harm than good, and that therefore, it is desirable to enact a law prohibiting *juvenile smoking*.

[This law, wherever it exists, is only honoured in its breach rather than in its observance, and indeed it cannot but be so, for there are ever so many ways of evading the law *in practice* and making it a dead letter. This is only by the way.]

Cheroots and Cigars are I believe some preparations from tobacco leaf infused with some attractive artificial attributes, and consequently command a wide, nay, a universal sale. But, *tobacco*, which by the way is said to be of American origin, and has managed to travel and make its home all over the world, both new and old, is a *narcotic* plant, and as such, though a substance which "relieves pain, it produces sleep, and in large doses brings on, stupor, coma, and even death, as opium, hemlock, alcohol, etc." Thus it has no virtue to reckon with, and when once indulged in can never render its use scarce; indeed our daily experience only too strongly supports this view; for every smoker exhausts many a packet and bale every day, thereby contributing his humble quota towards the high prices of match boxes diverted from their legitimate function of lighting in its noble and necessary sense. Thus, it will be seen that smoking does not create any activity, but produces stupor. It is not essential to health, it is condemned by the *tradition*,—jewel-casket of humanity and storehouse of accumulated experience and wisdom of ages—, it is expensive in the sense that small sands make a mountain. It is not supported by any moral or ethical law, and therefore it cannot stand on the mere dogmaic theory that it is a matter of individual taste purely physical. It behoves therefore to be condemned with a strong hand; but who is to condemn and how is the condemnation to be enforced and effectuated? That is the crux of our whole position in all our present vicious practices, and the society has become an orphan helpless, its members are not held by it by any kind of spiritual and social ties and links, they have become loose and disintegrated and recognise no leaders, leaders themselves are nowhere. Alas, what a fall, my countrymen! Will you ever rise from this storpor and stupor, admittedly self-inflicted by persisting in thougtless and vagrant practices, without any sense and proportion of mental control, moral law and social discipline! I must sing again in my own imperfect and ungraceful way, the *evils of cigar smoking*.

Cigar-smoking.

Hail to thee! Cigar, Hail to thee!
Where are the charms that man doth see in thee?
The man is rare with no cigar and fire to match,
From mansioned prince to peasant in the thatch!
Is it a fashion mere, or life's vital elixir,
Tho' Science of medicine and drug trace no tangible good in this marrer of air?
Is it the scent of leaf, or its odoriferous smoke,
Which is stimulous so strong and in constant need, alas, in fine but ends in smoke?
Where then doth lurk its merit, O, how fain I'd learn
The place of pride in life of man it has lived to earn!
Sure, the common tie which maketh one of all, be what other way,
'Twixt man and man, between East and West, I dare say.
But one thing need be told, the view of ancient sires and seers of India's old,
They placed a law on it, evil in effect and narcotic,
Which, modern *thinker free*, a Hindu tho' and of soul so sceptic,
Sets at naught at ease: Verily, a renegade though rash and bold, yet fit to shun and scold.
My friends of the West, pray, take me not amiss;
I know its virtues not, yet don't throw at me your hiss.
Read what the King of England said, James the First,

" His *Counterblast on Tobacco*," bidden
somewhere in racks and rust;
O, then, life was low, its style was poor,
Water much hath flowed since under
Thame's bridge, sure;
Mind not the words of him, indeed of great
wisdom
But yet called the wisest fool in Christendom,
Had better see what *Cigar* means,
More delicious and sweet than all food and
drink, fruits and beans.
'*Certainly I Glow All Radiant*
'*Certainly I Grant All Redemption.*'
My brethren of the soil, is it why you too
hug this vice?
I know not, despite thought thrice and over
thrice.
Neither clime nor scriptures of the land,
Nor path of ancient Sires' holy band,
Neither the patriot's love, nor love for the
past,
The country's good, nor political progress fast,
Mark it out as need to Indians, to *Brahmin
Hindus*:
How then has it come into this fatal use?
Don't you see how you fall a quick victim to
evil ways?
Vice doth never thrive, not at all; bear that
in mind always.
Ruin you wreak on your cursed self, on the
holy nation.
By your unbridled taste and reckless elation.
Beware what you do, where it leads you to,
Heed this warning and benefit will you.
Respect your past, revere its codes and cult,
Every Hindu man and woman, young and
adult.
Ignore not the great, revile not the pious
Never breed a leaning cankerous and
contumacious.
Curb your mind straying farther, farther from
the goal,
Bring it back to senses, save your languishing
soul.
Show by word and deed your love for the
land is there!
Else your boasted patriotism is all a castle
built in the air.
Indulge not imitations fleeting, vile and base
Get not wide of the mark avoiding the divine
grace.
" Hullo', moves fast the world too quick for
old to stay!
Why worry with all this stuff out of date at
this part of the day?
Fashion is strong, fusion is sure, reason is
gone, faith is nowhere,
All your sermon is but a beat in the air.
Move with the West, else you are lost,
Let not slip this chance you have for the last.
Your rite and ritual, tuft and raiment
Can't stand the present age for a moment,
Your diet and drink, your cult and code have
had their day,
And before the modern mad onslaught give
must perforce way."
What a maudlin you are, flushed with
modern spirit of wreck and ruin?
Why your blind leap into the trap not laid in
vain?
All this ugly aping, you fancy, leads to the
goal
A short cut to the salvation of the soul.
Persist not, *Brahmin in main*, in dismal
morale,
Pray, live life, pious and plain, godful and
true, whole and hale.

Olla Podrida.

I wonder what is come over the world or over me. There is nothing gay or funny for sometime past. It is all grim seriousness. I hope that things will mend soon and that men will behave better hereafter.

* * *

The national educational week has been grander on paper than in fact. I wonder what national education is supposed to be, Is it the best men of the nation giving the best of the nation's culture to the boys in national ways or is it something else? This puzzle has been a burden on my mind for a long time.

* * *

This is the season of anniversary celebrations. The schools are all closing and the door is being locked to the noise of valedictory addresses. The boys are all educated on wrong lines and valedictory addresses exhort them to do what they have never been taught or trained to do. What a cruel mockery?

* * *

Boys are like roads. I have never been able to find out whether roads are meant for walking or for depositing road materials. As a matter of fact every road is always groaning under road materials.

Mending begins before making is over. The spreading is to mending in the ratio of 100 to 1. The moral of this in regard to our boys is obvious. I am afraid to draw it lest I might be murdered by the bigots of the new system. Reader, draw the moral (in thy heart).

SCRUTATOR.

Peace and First Principles.

Copy of a letter sent by Mr. N. Subrahmanya Aiyar of Travancore and published in "The New Age" of London dated 6th March 1919.

Sir,

In the notes on "Foreign Affairs," published in your issue of November 7 last, I find it observed that "in these formative days it is first principles that are all-important." Never was a more opportune statement made. There is the Peace Conference sitting, and the history of the future is being shaped at it. To be reminded of the importance of first principles now is to be reminded of no mean thing. The principles on which the world's politics have been so far based have not brought us near the millennium. These principles are as we know, the principles of competition between nation and nation, class and class, sex and sex or "free trade" as the expression goes. By "free" is evidently meant "regardless of the rights and the interests of others." This is the cult of individualism, national individualism, class individualism and sex individualism, so many manifestations of the same cult. But it is individualism all the same. This individualism or mutual competitiveness between unit and unit in society, is certainly not a constructive force. It is clearly a destructive one. It cannot breed mutual confidence. It cannot conduce to love. Any peace edifice built on such a foundation cannot last. The faulty foundation has to be dug out and wholly removed, and a new one laid in its place. And that new one is the implanting in men's minds of the consciousness that each nation, weak or strong, ignorant or enlightened, has a right to its own land and to its own home market, and that within each nation, weak or strong, the several component classes have an equal right to live through mutual exchange of their respective products. The fact has also to be remembered that, corresponding to the two large divisions of human kind, man and woman, there are also two vast divisions of service, family service and social service, and that it is only by entrusting one of the two to man and the other to woman that the organization of humanity on stable lines will be possible. The saddling of woman with social duties is as hostile to the best interests of mankind as the entrusting of family duties to man. Each is a vast field, is as honourable as the other, and requires the full-time labours of one entire sex. It is the misuse of mutual relation in the commerce of nations that is the ultimate cause of all modern wars. It is its right use extending down to the commerce of the home that offers the only cure.

I have read with great interest "A. E. R.'s" article "Women in Parliament," in the same issue of the New Age. His objection is only to particular social duties being taken up by women, such as membership of the highest sovereign body of the Empire. On any lesser councils "A. E. R." would have no objection to women being invited or encouraged to sit. If the scientific principle of division of labour is to be applied to the sexes, it cannot permit man or woman to trespass on each other's province. Woman may be trained; and be of great value, to assist man in his social duty. But woman undertaking duties other than those of the family and the home, independently and without reference to man and to the necessary neglect of the family, is a violation of sociological principle, and cannot lead to orderly life either of family or home. For if the sexes in a family cannot agree to restrict themselves to separate fields and live as one in a bond of service to each other and of common service to the universe at large, how can nations be expected to confine themselves to their respective territorial limits and live in reciprocal service and without mutual aggression as one great organism of humanity? Sex is Nature's distinction and the distinction is not without purpose. And the sacred marriage-contract between the sexes, with the responsibility for each of the two great functions family and social, solely and solemnly undertaken by each sex, is the heaven-ordained union of one to the other. If the sex relationships are wrong, the entire superstructure of society can be no less so. From part to whole, *i.e.*, family to nation and from nation to mankind, must order proceed in logical sequence, though of course, it is equally true that disorder above must mean disorder below, disorder in the nation producing disorder in the family, and disorder among nations meaning disorder between classes in a nation.

Gems of Indian Chastity.

[BY G. S. RAMANATHAN.]

I

Sakuntala the fair, Nalayani,
Who prow'ss of chastity ov'r others proves;
The peerless Sita, whose true love all moves;
She, who for love gave all, Damayanti ;
The daughter of Kings, who out of love free
Afore Sun of whose love others' love pales,
The fair, the noble Draupadi. In tales
Of chastity their perfection we see.
Which other land boasts of such queens, so fair,
So true, who left their regal thrones, to share
With gladness, woman's heaven, husband's side ?
Oh, it is thine alone, O India rare !
To women own who for love heaven dare
And earth defy, with humility for pride.

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